In the Specification:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 2 as follows:

Since all of the packets are sent to a third layer after <u>being</u> subjected to the above-mentioned operations, a processing delay is produced also for those packets which are to be hopped to the next node and need not be processed at this node. This results in significant degradation of a network performance as a whole.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 6 as follows:

Herein, the term "cut-through" represents a connection in which the operation in the ~~first~~ <u>third</u> layer is omitted by some means even if a hop-by-hop connection is normally required, i.e., a connection in which packet transfer is carried out from one logical network to another logical network only by the operation in a layer lower than the ~~first~~ <u>third</u> layer.